DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 069 588 SO 004 996

AUTHOR Katz, Michael B.
TITLE Who Went to School?
PUB DATE Jan 72
NOTE 33p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *Attendance; Demography; *Educational Demand; Educational Equality; *Educational History; *Educational Research; *Educational Sociology; Educational Status Comparison; Family (Sociological Unit); Religion
IDENTIFIERS Canada

ABSTRACT

School attendance, an element at the center of educational history, not only uncovers important aspects of day-to-day history of schools, but also reflects a broad social, economic, and demographic structure of the times in which patterns of school attendance record family decisions about formal education. Rather than studying school registers to investigate who went to school, this paper demonstrates how, through the census, the gross patterns of attendance among the children of any group can be studied. A case study of Hamilton, Ontario, during the year 1851, when the mean school attendance percentage was 40.8, and 1861, when the mean school attendance rose to 57.8, shows how, although the ethnic composition and family structures of the population remained similar, patterns of school attendance changed dramatically. Factors, in addition to age, affecting school attendance were religion, ethnicity, occupation, wealth, and family size. The source of the increase was proportional; more children to school and the difference between groups remained as they were before. Despite the rise in school attendance among every group, the poorer groups did not gain an advantage of more schooling than other groups, so that for the most part, schooling still reflected and reinforced the class structure of this mid-nineteenth century Canadian city. (SJM)

ED 069588

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

SP 001 996

"Who Went to School?"

by

Michael B. Katz

The Ontario Institute For Studies in Education
and
University of Toronto

January, 1972

I

"Calmly, deliberately, and advisedly, I give it as my opinion that no one other anti-progressive agent exercises so pernicious and clogging an influence on the educational growth and prosperity of Canada as irregular attendance of children in school."[1] The aura of profundity and revelation with which the author of this statement surrounded his remarks surely was unnecessary; by 1861, when it appeared, virtually no one associated with schools would have disagreed. Nearly all of the writers on educational problems during the last two decades had made the same point. After all, they believed, as Mr.G.A.Barber the superintendent of schools in Toronto put it in 1854, that "a numerous and regular attendance of scholars" was "the keystone of successful popular education".[2] If that were the case, the success of popular education remained problematical. Judge Haggarty might have substituted the name of almost any other North American city when he told a grand jury that "the streets of Toronto, like those of too many other towns, still present the miserable spectacle of idle, untaught children, male and female - a crop too rapidly ripening for the dram-shop, the brothel and the prison - and that too under the shadow of spacious and admirably kept school houses, into which all may enter free of cost."[3]

To schoolmen throughout North America securing the regular and punctual attendance of all children at school was the central educational problem of the nineteenth century. In fact they wrote about attendance with such monotonous regularity that their complaints

comprise a litany within educational documents whose significance, by its very frequency, it has become easy for the historian to underestimate. Despite the fact that attendance was the principal problem and preoccupation of late Victorian schoolmen, there is only one modern monograph in English on the topic.[4]

It is certainly the case that from first impressions the history of school attendance seems a narrow and dry subject of little general interest. But, appearances aside, its analysis provides a fresh and provocative lead into problems central to social and intellectual development. To paraphrase Mr. Barber, school attendance is the keystone of educational history. A few examples should make that point clear.

First of all, the literature of school attendance both reflects and illuminates important topics in the history of social thought. One of these is the controversy concerning the role of the state in the promotion of social welfare. The critical decisions about school attendance policy rested on contentious assumptions about the obligations, limitations and style of the state and its relationship to essentially private groups such as the family. Three kinds of decision illustrate this point: should the provision of school facilities assume the attendance of all or a portion of the eligible children; what, if any, degree of coercion should be applied to bring recalcitrant children into school; what sanctions should be levied against parents who refused to send their children to school?

It is at the point that it intersects with and overlaps the histories of the family and social structure that the study of school attendance acquires broadest significance for the social historian. Patterns of school attendance may be redefined as the record of family decisions about formal education. Seen as artifacts of the nineteenth century family, shifting percentages of school attendance provide important clues into elusive areas such as: relationships between social class and parental attitude; the impact of economic fluctuation and technological advance on family fortune and behavior; or changes in the length and nature of dependency in different sorts of families over time.

Finally, school attendance is at the center of educational history. Its literature abounds in explicit and relatively uninhibited statements about the purposes and powers of formal schooling. At the same time, it reveals the major everyday problems which confronted schoolmen. Thus the history of school attendance uncovers an important aspect of the day-to-day history of schools. In the process, it wrenches us loose from our easy contemporary acceptance of universal schooling as a fact of life. For we learn the magnitude --and presumption-- of the attempt to insure the receipt of an elementary education by every child.[5]

The systematic analysis of school attendance in history is a vast and intricate undertaking. However, there are several quite straightforward approaches with which one may begin. One, using traditional historical sources, is to analyse with care and discrimination the statements about school attendance in educational writing and to assess

their broad social and cultural significance. This sort of analysis requires a consideration of what was said about at least the following topics: (1) why people should go to school; (2) who should go to school; (3) how long people should go to school; (4) what should be done about people who refuse to go to school; (5) for what reasons some people resist schooling. The study of activities undertaken to promote school attendance complements the analysis of the sentiments expressed in educational literature. It is possible, for instance, to study the history of truant officers, or the passing and implementation of legislation bearing on attendance, or to follow the efforts of school authorities as they experimented with one device after another to overcome the enormous social and economic handicaps that hampered their efforts to bring every child into school. David Rubenstein's fascinating monograph, School Attendance in London, 1870-1904, is a model of this approach to the topic.

Even if we knew all that was necessary about the thoughts and activities of people concerned with school attendance, we should still be left with at least three critical and unanswered questions: who actually went to school? What factors determined the level of school attendance within a community? How and why did levels of school attendance differ between communities? Through the use of quantitative sources it is feasible to attack these problems systematically. To begin with the last question --the differentiation between communities-- a variety of documents provide evidence about levels of school attendance, defined as the percentage of children of a given age group attending

school during some period of time. Using these sources, which are available at the least from quite early in the nineteenth century, one can assemble statistics which show how the level of school attendance in a given place fluctuated over time and how that level differed from place to place. The technical problems involved in assembling statistics of this sort should not be minimized, for problems of arriving at comparable rates and of assessing reliability can be very great. In this endeavour the educational historian has much to learn from the historical demographer, who has developed sophisticated techniques to handle similar problems. There would seem to be no reason why these techniques cannot be adapted to provide reasonably reliable series of statistics on school attendance over long periods of time.

Whenever it is possible to find figures for school attendance, other social, economic and demographic information about the same place can almost always be located as well. Censuses, assessment rolls, vital statistics, educational reports and other sources may be combined to produce a composite picture of individual communities that includes school attendance, social structure, demographic character and relative prosperity. This information may then be used to construct and test hypotheses about the relation of school attendance, considered as a dependent variable, to its social context. Here are examples of a few of the many hypotheses that might be explored in this way: school attendance varied inversely with the proportion of Irish immigrants in a community; school attendance varied directly with the proportion of

the workforce employed in professional and commercial occupations; school attendance decreased as the proportion of children employed in factories increased; school attendance increased directly with per capita wealth; school attendance increased most during periods of industrial and technological change; school attendance varied inversely with the birth rate; and so on. The list could be extended for pages. It is not a list, and this is the crucial point, that contains questions of merely passing interest. Each hypothesis that I have stated is vital to understanding the actual functions of schooling. But there is not one of them which historians can say, with any confidence, is true.

The search for evidence that bears on hypotheses which attempt to explain differences in school attendance between communities should not obscure the importance of differences within the same community. As Haley Bamman shows in his essay in this collection, there were frequently striking variations in school attendance between the districts of a city. One of the most fruitful ways to approach these differences, he has shown, is to study the timing of the provision of educational facilities. His essay demonstrates that the geography of school building is central to the interpretation of attendance patterns as well as to the study of educational purpose. The fact that a city chose to build schools in certain places and not in others reflects in part the uses which those schools were to serve, for it defines, in advance, to whom education would be most accessible.

Finally, there is the question of who it was that went to school. This may be studied in two ways: one is through school registers. Surprisingly many nineteenth century registers (lists of children attending a school) still exist. It is an intricate, lengthy but nonetheless entirely feasible procedure to trace the students whose names appear in registers to other sources, especially to the manuscript census. This in effect locates the student in the context of his family; it shows the occupations, religion and birthplace of his father and mother, the ages of his brothers and sisters, and, as well, a good deal about the structure and economic status of his household. This is the way in which to examine the social background of students who attended different sorts of schools. If the registers are good, the questions may be refined; for it may be possible to examine not only the fact of attendance but its regularity and duration as well. Consider just a few of the possibilities that may be tested in this way: perhaps there was little social class influence on who went to school at some point during the year but very much on the regularity and length of that attendance. There may have been a marked difference in social origins between children <u>entering</u> and children <u>graduating</u> high school. It could be the case that common schools have been common in name only; since early in their history the realities of residential segregation may have kept the range of social status in most of them quite narrow. Once again these are sample questions which are both unanswered and vital to interpreting the history of education.

The other method of finding out who went to school is to begin with the manuscript census itself. Usually the census schedule contained a column which was supposed to be filled in if a person had attended school during the previous year. Beginning with this column, the gross fact of school attendance may be related to a host of other variables about the status and structure of the family and household. This procedure has one obvious and serious disadvantage; it confounds attendance at all types of school and it permits no conclusions about regularity or length of attendance during the year. It is the grossest possible measure. Nonetheless, it has the great merit of including the entire population. Nowhere have I ever seen a complete set of school registers for a community in the middle of the nineteenth century. Thus the study of regis ers, vital though it is, is almost always the analysis of attendance at a particular school, whereas by starting with the census one may study the gross patterns of attendance among the children of any group, religious, ethnic, occupational, or any other into which the census material can be arranged. In the rest of this essay I shall demonstrate how that may be done. In part that discussion should serve as an illustration of what may be learned through a quantitative approach to the history of school attendance; it should also point to a number of significant and intriguing suggestions about just who it was that went to school.

II

In the remainder of this essay I shall discuss patterns of school attendance in Hamilton, Ontario, in 1851 and 1861. The information comes from the manuscript censuses of those years, which have been coded in entirety as part of the Canadian Social History Project, which I direct.[6] In 1851 Hamilton, a lakeport about forty miles west of Toronto, was a commercial city with a population of slightly over 14,000. It was largely an immigrant city; fewer than ten percent of the heads of household had been born in what is now Ontario. Most had come from Scotland, England and Ireland, and about six percent had emigrated from the United States. Although Hamilton's population had increased to more than 19,000 in 1861, industrialization had hardly begun, and the city retained many of its earlier features. Throughout the decade the ethnic composition of the population remained remarkably similar and its household and family structures altered very little. Patterns of school attendance, on the other hand, changed dramatically.

The manuscript censuses contained a column headed "attended school during the past year". In more than 85% of the cases this column was completed for individual children within the household; in the remaining cases the head of the household merely stated the number of people living with him who had attended school but did not specify which particular individuals they were. There is no reason to believe that as a general rule this column was filled in unreliably. The aggregate figures for school attendance correspond reasonably to the reports of the superintendent of schools with some allowance for attendance at private schools. They are also comparable to figures

for other cities.[7] It is therefore possible to analyse the patterns of attendance they reveal with some degree of confidence.

At mid-century school attendance remained far from universal; within families the mean percentage of children aged 5-16 who had attended school during 1851 was 40.8 (Table 1). On the whole rather more boys than girls attended at every age level, from 3 to 20 (Table 3). However, very few of either sex --0.4% of the three year olds, 3.9% of the four year olds and 17.7% of the five year olds-- entered school before the age of six when school going became relatively common with nearly a third of the children in attendance. The years of heaviest school attendance were seven through thirteen; only then did the proportion of children exceed forty per cent. The peak years for attendance were nine through eleven, the only ages at which more than half of the children went to school. After age 13, attendance dropped rapidly: only 28.9% of the 14 year olds went to school, a figure which dwindled to 8.7% of the 17 year olds.

In addition to age, religion, ethnicity, wealth and family size all affected school attendance. The least likely ethnic group to send its children to school was the Irish; less than one-third of the children aged 5-16 whose fathers had been born in Ireland went to school in 1851 (Table 1). By contrast those fathers who had been born in Scotland and in Canada each sent more than one-half of their school-age children to school. Statistics for religion reinforce those for ethnicity (Table 1); less than thirty percent of Catholic children attended school compared to more than one-half of the children of members of the Church of Scotland and Wesleyan Methodists and over

60% of those whose fathers were Free Church Presbyterians. The obvious conclusion is that Irish Catholicism and Free Church Presbyterianism, respectively, retarded and promoted school attendance. However, this explanation takes no account of other factors; it could be that Irish Catholics were poor and Scottish Presbyterians prosperous, and therein lay the difference. The point is of some importance, for it raises the question to what extent school attendance was a product of cultural and to what extent a result of economic factors.

There was no direct measure of wealth on the census. The closest indicator is number of servants, which in fact provides quite a reliable way of separating the moderately prosperous and the wealthy from the rest of the population. There were three categories into which people could be divided on the basis of servants: those who employed none, about 70% of the household heads in 1851; those who employed one, about 21% and those who employed two or more, about 9%. The precise social meaning of these distinctions is not clear. However, Eric Hobshawm has argued that the employment of a servant signified middle class status in mid-nineteenth century Britain, and another historian recently claimed that the employment of two or more servants distinguished the affluent or upper class in the same period.[8] The data from Hamilton support these contentions; there is a direct association between the employment of servants and economic rank when census and assessment records are joined, and, additionally, the three groups differ from each other on almost every measure that we have devised.[9] School attendance is no exception. The proportion of children attending

school generally increased with the number of servants in a family (Table 1): from slightly more than one-third in families with none to more than one-half in families with one and even higher in those with two or more servants.

Thus far two quite commonsensical patterns emerge from the statistics: poor Irish Catholics sent relatively few children to school and prosperous native and Scottish families sent proportionally many. However, the relations between attendance and both occupation and family size complicate this tidy picture. The practices of men in different occupations differed widely with respect to sending their children to school, and these differences cut across status lines in a sometimes inexplicable way (Table 1). Lawyers, for instance, sent relatively few, 28.6%, of their school age children to school. It is entirely possible that they hired private tutors. Yet their practice was not typical of all professionals, for doctors sent substantially more of their children, an average of about 58%, to school, and merchants fell somewhere in the middle, with generally about 45.6% of their children in attendance. Craftsmen in some trades sent more of their children to school than did some professionals and businessmen. Tinsmiths, for instance, sent 84.7% of their children to school, a figure exceeded only by the teachers, 91.7% of whose children had attended. Nonetheless, there were striking differences between trades: an average of 37.7% of the children of shoemakers had attended compared to 53.9% of those of cabinet makers, to take one example. The figure most consistent with other findings is the one for laborers, who sent the fewest children of any group, less than one quarter, to school.

Factors particular to individual trades undoubtedly influenced school attendance patterns. The high attendance of tinsmiths may have been a product of their wealth, for they were the wealthiest of the craftsmen, wealthier by and large,in fact, than people in some commercial callings, such as clerks.[10] On the other hand, the relatively high attendance among children of cabinet makers and carpenters may have reflected the demands of their crafts, which called for a knowledge of mathematics; certainly in England men in both groups were noted for sending their children to school for just that reason.[11]

Family size is the other factor that operated independently of wealth on school attendance. Contemporary research emphasizes the connection between a small family size and educational achievement, and that finding accords well with popular stereotypes of ambitious and aspriring parents restricting the size of their families. Thus we might expect that in the nineteenth century small families sent proportionally more of their children to school than large ones. This, however, was decidedly not the case. Among the wealthiest families, those with two or more servants, it was those with the most children, five or more, that generally sent the greatest proportion of children of all ages to school (Table 6). In fact within each economic rank it was the families with the fewest children which sent proportionally least children to school. The explanation of these patterns is not at all clear; it is a problem to which we shall have to return when we consider the degree to which the same patterns persisted ten years later.

However, before we examine the changes in school attendance patterns that came about in the next decade, it is useful to point out that the same relationships which I have described appear even if different statistical measures are used. One different measure is the percentage of families in which more than half of the children aged 5-16 attended school (Table 2). Here, once again, the Irish and the Catholics score low, people with servants very high and the occupations present a mixed picture.

Likewise, with one or two important refinements, the same results emerge from the study of attendance among specific age groups (Table 4). Catholics once more are the lowest of any group at each age: they sent their children to school later, they sent fewer at each age, and they removed them earliest. At the other extreme the Free Church Presbyterians still appear the most education conscious of any denomination. Similarly, among ethnic groups the Irish had the lowest percentage of attendance at every age, except the very youngest, a point to which I shall return. The people sending fewest very young children were the native Canadians, who more than compensated for this by keeping their children in school longer than men who had been born anywhere else, although the Americans were a reasonably close second. For most occupations the numbers, when children are divided into age groups, are too small to make very many meaningful statements. Nonetheless, children of laborers do appear at the bottom in every age group, except the very youngest. Merchants kept about two-thirds of their children in school through the age of fourteen, which was exceptionally high. Not surprisingly, people without

servants sent fewer of their children to school at each age, with the exception of the very youngest, and removed them soonest. Among the very wealthy, it was, as in other measures, those men with the largest families who sent the most children at each age.

Some of these relations are puzzling. Why, for instance, did the poor Irish Catholic laborers send a relatively high number of their youngest children to school when they sent so few of their older ones? Perhaps the explanation is simple; schools served as baby-sitting agencies for poor working mothers. It is likewise difficult to understand why, among the wealthy, a large family size promoted school attendance so sharply. Could it be that the relations between family size and school attendance represent random happenings, peculiar to that year and not to be trusted? One way to answer that question, quite obviously, is to examine the same relationships at another point in time.

III

A major change in social behavior occurred between 1851 and 1861, for school going increased dramatically. Within families the average percentage of children aged 5-16 attending school rose 17%, from 40.8% to 57.8% (Table 1). What was the source of this increase? Who was in school that had not been there a decade earlier? In the most general terms there are two possible answers to this question. First, the increase was disproprotional; one group of people increased their rate of school attendance very much more than the others. One variant of

this possibility is that the increase came from people who had not used the school very much before. In other words, it represented a mass invasion of the common schools by the poor. Another variant is that the increase might represent a drive by a group already education conscious. The middle class may have provided most of the increase, thereby extending its lead over the poor, simply by sending all rather than the majority of its children to school. The second major possibility is that the increase was proportional; everybody sent more children to school and the differences between groups remained as they were before. Obviously, the interpretation of the rise in school attendance depends upon which of these possibilities was in fact true.

The first fact of importance about the increase is that it spread itself quite evenly among all age groups (Table 3). There was a slight decline in the proportion of very young children, those aged 3-5, attending school, but by the age of seven the rise was marked. The age at which school attendance peaked was ten; nearly 80% of the ten year olds attended school during 1861, an increase of about 25% during the decade. In 1851 most children left school between the ages of 11 and 12; by 1861 the average school life had increased by about three years, for most students now left between the ages of 14 and 15. Likewise, the attendance of students older than 15 also increased sharply.

Despite the increase in the proportion and length of school attendance, differences between groups remained mostly unaffected. Each economic, religious and ethnic group sent proportionally more children to school, and the gaps between them remained about as wide

as ever (Table 1). For instance, the average percentage of children from families with no servants attending school rose about 20%, from families with one servant about 9% and from families with two or more servants, about 24%. Similarly, although the mean percentage of Irish children attending rose from 31.3% to 40.1%, and although the proportion of Catholic children rose in a like manner, both the Irish and the Catholics remained lowest because other groups also increased at such a sharp rate. Once more laborers sent fewer children than men in any other occupations, but, with that exception, relations between occupation and school attendance are as fuzzy as ever. Percentages of attendance continued to vary widely from one specific kind of job to another.

Some interesting patterns do emerge from a study of specific age groups (Table 4). Among the 7-13 year olds Catholics made the greatest gain; their proportion of attendance rose from 31.3% to 60.1%, a greater increase than any other group. At the same time, among ethnic groups, Americans now sent fewer of their 7-13 year old children to school than did the Irish, a shift reflected in other figures as well and one which may reflect an influx of ex-slaves into the city. As in 1851, wealthier children stayed in school considerably longer than poorer ones, and at every age the children of laborers went to school least often. It is important to stress this point because the laborers sent fewer children to school than either the Catholics or the Irish. This points to two conclusions: first, it was probably the more prosperous Catholic families, ones in which the father was not a laborer, that accounted for the particularly pronounced increase

in Catholic school attendance. Perhaps the settlement of the separate school question in the 1850s removed a barrier between aspiring, upwardly mobile Catholic families and the schools. The first Roman Catholic separate school in Hamilton was established in 1854; by 1861 it enrolled 841 pupils (Table 7).[12] The second and related conclusion is that class, defined here as wealth, counted more than either religion or ethnicity in school attendance. It was the poverty that accompanied laboring status and not Catholicism or Irish birth that did most to keep children out of school.

The one factor that remains to be examined is family size. The relations between family size and attendance, interestingly, are even sharper in 1861 than in 1851, but their direction is similar (Tables 5 and 6). The fact that a large family size did nothing to inhibit, and to the contrary frequently promoted, school attendance is clear. One place where family size was of particular importance was among very young children. Of the children aged 3-5 from small families (1-2 children), 3.1% attended school, compared to 6.5% from families with three or four children and 10.0% from families with five or more. Controlling for wealth modifies the findings slightly, for it appears that the relation between early attendance and family size was most pronounced among families with no servants; large families of this rank sent nearly 19% of their young children to school. Among the more prosperous families the relations between family size and attendance are sharpest for six year olds, for large families with servants were more likely than smaller ones to send children of that age to school.

These persistent patterns reinforce, first of all, my earlier suggestion that schooling played an important role for large poor families. It provided the mother with someplace to send young children when she had to work. For large prosperous families schooling may have served a somewhat different but equally important role. Education conscious parents may have commonly begun their children's education at home at about the age of six as a way of preparing them for entry into school the next year. However, in very large families this may have been difficult to do because there would simply be too many distractions. In these circumstances parents might have felt that it was important to start their children in school a year earlier than usual if they were not to lag behind the children from smaller families.

With these relationships in mind, we may turn to the general question with which this section began: the significance and interpretation of the increase in school attendance between 1851 and 1861. Consider the following hypothesis: the economic and occupational benefits that school provides come primarily from the <u>differential</u>, rather than the <u>absolute</u>, amount received. It is, very simply, an advantage to receive more schooling than someone else. It follows from this that for any group to gain an advantage from prolonged school attendance it must decrease the differential between itself and other groups. Its gain must be relative as well as absolute. In Hamilton this did not happen. Despite the dramatic rise in school attendance among every group, the affluent were as far ahead at the end of the decade as they had been at its beginning. Insofar as schooling affects

social mobility, the life-chances of a poor boy had not increased very much,if at all. Extensions of educational facilities (such as those suggested by Table 7) served primarily to enable the affluent to retain their favored position. The poor had to run harder than ever just to keep from falling farther behind.[13]

Some factors modified the relations between wealth and school attendance. School going served important economic and psychological functions for large, poor families and important educational ones for large rich ones. At the same time men in some trades which relied peculiarly on formal learning encouraged their children to attend school more than other artisans did. Still, for the most part schooling reflected and reinforced the class structure of this mid-nineteenth century Canadian city.

TABLE 1

MEAN PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN AGE 5-16 ATTENDING SCHOOL

BY SELECTED VARIABLES

HAMILTON, ONTARIO, 1851 AND 1861

Number of Children 5-16 in Family	Children 5-16 Attending School			
	1851		1861	
	%	N	%	N
One	29.1	288	55.3	187
Two	41.9	318	53.2	339
Three	47.5	230	52.4	459
Four	66.7	155	59.8	339
Five	60.8	60	62.8	240
Six	58.1	22	66.2	157
Seven	61.7	18	68.7	68
Eight	66.7	1	73.8	32
Nine	80.0	1	70.1	23
Age of Parent				
20 - 29	36.5	78	40.6	106
30 - 39	41.4	464	55.0	688
40 - 49	42.6	460	60.7	650
50 - 59	40.7	178	61.9	321
60 & over	28.0	58	61.5	98
Birthplace of Parent				
England	45.1	336	61.3	484
Scotland	51.6	184	68.5	342
Ireland	31.3	519	49.1	694
Canada West	53.3	90	65.8	134
United States	45.9	88	55.3	102
Religion of Parent				
Anglican	45.8	310	59.1	566
Church of Scotland	53.0	31	63.3	142
Catholic	29.8	334	42.6	483
Free Church Presb.	60.3	35	69.8	148
"Presbyterian"	47.4	119	62.8	100
Wesleyan Methodist	55.4	64	67.8	252
"Methodist"	41.3	113	49.7	15
Baptist	38.3	38	57.8	61
"Protestant"	38.3	115	60.0	1

TABLE 1 (2)

	Children 5-16 Attending School			
	1851		1861	
Number of Servants	%	N	%	N
None	35.3	885	55.3	1481
One	51.1	255	60.2	281
Two	60.1	52	84.1	61
Three	58.1	31	85.1	26
Four	105.3	11	78.5	11
Five	0.0	3	100.0	3
Six	100.0	1	100.0	6
Seven	100.0	1	-	-
Eleven	-		100.0	1
Fourteen	-		100.0	1
Occupations				
Baker	40.6	8	63.9	18
Lawyer	28.6	7	58.0	22
Blacksmith	43.2	23	46.1	42
Cabinet Maker	53.9	15	56.1	20
Carpenter	45.8	46	62.4	128
Clergyman	85.7	7	86.8	12
Clerk	50.1	26	50.1	29
Constable	41.7	4	61.7	5
Engineer	25.0	11	73.1	12
Innkeeper	58.0	23	86.1	6
Laborer	24.0	261	40.0	378
Merchant	45.6	28	63.5	44
Physician	57.9	11	81.5	13
Tailor	31.0	39	56.5	42
Teacher	91.7	5	70.0	5
Tinsmith	84.7	10	67.6	15
Gentleman	64.8	29	90.5	27
Shoemaker	37.7	56	57.4	53
Watchmaker	41.7	7	86.1	6
Mean for Whole Population	40.8		57.8	

TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES WITH MORE THAN 50%
OF CHILDREN AGE 5-16 ATTENDING SCHOOL
BY SELECTED VARIABLES,
HAMILTON, ONTARIO, 1851 AND 1861

	More Than Half Attending			
	1851		1861	
Number of Children 5-16 in Family	%	N	%	N
One	23.6	288	47.6	187
Two	35.2	318	45.7	339
Three	39.6	230	46.0	459
Four	57.4	155	53.6	339
Five	58.3	60	61.3	240
Six	50.0	22	64.4	157
Seven	66.7	18	70.6	68
Eight	100.0	1	68.8	32
Nine	100.0	1	82.6	23
Age of Parent				
20 - 29	27.0	78	35.9	106
30 - 39	36.2	464	49.9	688
40 - 49	36.8	460	57.8	650
50 - 59	32.0	178	54.9	321
60 & over	22.4	58	48.0	98
Birthplace of Parent				
England	38.7	336	58.4	484
Scotland	45.2	184	64.0	342
Ireland	25.8	519	68.9	694
Canada West	42.3	90	60.7	134
United States	38.6	88	46.2	102
Religion of Parent				
Anglican	38.4	310	54.1	566
Church of Scotland	61.5	31	59.8	142
Catholic	23.3	334	39.0	483
Free Church Presb.	48.6	35	64.1	148
"Presbyterian"	44.6	119	53.0	100
Wesleyan Methodist	48.5	64	61.9	252
"Methodist"	32.8	113	66.7	15
Baptist	34.2	38	55.7	61
"Protestant"	31.2	115	-	1

TABLE 2 (2)

	More Than Half Attending			
	1851		1861	
Number of Servants	%	N	%	N
None	29.6	885	50.5	1481
One	44.4	255	56.2	281
Two	50.0	52	75.4	61
Three	51.6	31	61.5	26
Four or More	58.7	11	82.3	11
Occupations				
Baker	25.0	8	66.7	18
Lawyer	28.6	7	50.0	22
Blacksmith	43.5	23	40.5	42
Cabinet Maker	46.6	15	55.0	20
Carpenter	39.2	46	61.8	128
Clergyman	57.1	7	91.7	12
Clerk	42.3	26	55.1	29
Constable	50.0	4	60.0	5
Engineer	18.2	11	75.0	12
Innkeeper	60.9	23	83.4	6
Laborer	21.5	261	35.2	378
Merchant	39.3	28	59.2	44
Physician	45.4	11	69.3	13
Tailor	25.6	39	57.1	42
Teacher (male)	80.0	5	40.0	5
Tinsmith	70.0	10	73.3	15
Gentleman	48.3	29	74.0	27
Shoemaker	28.6	56	56.6	53
Watchmaker	42.8	7	45.6	6

TABLE 3

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE BY AGE

HAMILTON, ONTARIO, 1851 AND 1861

	Males in School				Females in School				Males & Females in School			
	1851		1861		1851		1861		1851		1861	
Age	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
3 years old	0.9	229	0.4	277	0.0	226	0.7	295	0.4	455	0.5	572
4 years old	3.5	170	2.7	291	4.2	192	1.8	271	3.9	362	2.3	562
5 years old	22.7	211	19.1	257	11.4	167	14.0	271	17.7	378	16.5	528
6 years old	32.9	149	41.1	231	32.6	138	41.8	227	32.6	287	42.2	458
7 years old	52.2	186	65.0	186	45.9	135	58.4	226	49.5	321	61.4	412
8 years old	53.9	154	71.2	205	42.4	165	73.3	176	48.0	319	72.2	381
9 years old	61.5	161	72.8	169	46.8	154	75.5	188	54.3	315	74.4	357
10 years old	47.8	138	79.5	200	54.9	152	77.7	166	45.1	290	78.7	366
11 years old	58.3	132	75.9	170	50.9	106	72.3	137	55.0	238	74.3	307
12 years old	46.8	126	75.0	176	40.6	138	72.1	172	43.6	264	73.6	348
13 years old	41.3	138	80.3	142	38.5	109	69.2	130	40.1	247	75.0	272
14 years old	30.3	122	57.6	144	27.2	113	65.9	126	28.9	235	61.5	270
15 years old	22.0	91	40.5	153	22.0	100	42.3	111	19.2	191	41.3	264
16 years old	16.9	89	28.9	142	12.5	104	29.7	118	14.5	193	29.2	260
17 years old	6.9	72	23.1	108	10.1	89	19.1	115	8.7	161	21.2	223
18 years old	6.4	63	13.5	104	11.2	85	6.1	115	3.5	148	9.6	219
19 years old	6.6	61	4.2	95	3.1	68	4.9	82	5.0	156	4.5	177
20 years old	7.1	42	3.6	83	0.0	48	0.0	91	3.3	90	1.7	174

N = Total Number in School and Out

TABLE 4

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN OF VARIOUS AGE GROUPS

ATTENDING SCHOOL

BY SELECTED CATEGORIES

HAMILTON, ONTARIO, 1851 AND 1861

Category	Age Groups											
	3-5		6		7-13		14		15-16		17-20	
	%		%		%		%		%		%	
Religion of Head of Household	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861
Anglican	6.6	7.1	30.3	41.9	51.1	74.0	42.2	59.5	27.4	35.7	7.1	12.1
Church of Scot.	2.9	6.3	62.5	48.3	73.8	77.5	28.6	76.2	36.4	32.5	0.0	6.9
Catholic	6.4	4.5	24.1	27.7	31.3	60.1	15.5	43.3	8.1	22.0	1.7	2.8
Free Church Presb.	10.2	7.6	50.0	51.3	52.7	84.9	57.1	63.3	37.5	56.2	14.3	9.6
"Presbyterian"	6.5	5.5	35.5	47.8	66.9	80.9	25.0	83.3	24.3	52.2	6.1	18.8
Wesleyan Methodist	14.0	7.9	36.4	50.0	67.6	75.9	38.5	74.4	31.3	42.7	8.3	16.1
"Methodist"	5.2	5.9	50.0	40.0	48.4	60.0	35.3	55.6	7.1	50.0	7.7	9.1
Baptist	8.9	3.9	20.0	52.9	55.4	65.1	0.0	100.0	10.0	55.6	0.0	0.0
"Protestant"	6.9	-	40.0	100.0	56.7	100.0	15.0	-	7.6	-	3.3	-
Whole Group	6.9	6.2	32.6	41.4	48.7	72.4	28.9	61.5	18.2	35.2	5.3	10.0
Birthplace of Head of Household												
England	9.6	6.9	33.3	49.6	54.5	75.2	20.6	72.2	16.8	36.5	5.4	8.7
Scotland	6.6	7.5	40.0	53.8	65.2	82.8	40.0	64.4	27.1	52.1	9.1	12.3
Ireland	6.5	4.8	31.0	32.6	37.6	65.3	22.7	51.9	12.4	24.8	2.4	5.4
Canada West	4.1	6.6	29.4	34.4	53.1	77.7	52.9	66.7	44.0	56.8	5.9	18.3
United States	2.8	5.7	34.8	45.2	53.5	61.2	50.0	60.0	21.7	27.3	16.7	26.3
Number of Servants in Household												
None	5.8	5.6	20.8	39.8	43.0	70.2	22.4	59.4	14.0	33.0	3.5	7.9
One	9.3	6.4	34.5	42.7	58.7	77.2	42.1	60.6	20.5	39.1	5.9	18.8
Two	7.9	10.0	60.0	50.0	79.8	90.0	81.8	100.0	45.0	57.9	28.0	12.1
Three	3.4	19.4	50.0	54.5	63.6	86.1	20.0	60.0	54.5	83.3	0.0	26.7
Four or more	18.2	6.2	83.3	66.7	76.0	88.2	100.0	100.0	50.0	33.3	66.7	33.3

TABLE 4 (2)

Category	Age Groups											
	3-5		6		7-13		14		15-16		17-20	
	%		%		%		%		%		%	
Number of Children in Family	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861
One	3.8	2.3	18.2	38.9	52.9	57.9	55.6	47.4	8.3	41.4	9.4	12.2
Two	3.2	3.3	28.6	50.9	54.9	69.8	30.8	55.6	17.5	18.3	4.8	8.8
Three	6.1	4.6	27.4	40.2	43.9	73.8	24.1	68.3	12.8	36.4	1.5	9.2
Four	6.8	8.3	42.4	37.6	46.9	72.9	19.5	55.6	21.5	35.1	4.7	11.5
Five	9.5	10.0	31.0	46.7	52.7	69.7	34.8	63.4	22.8	40.2	7.6	8.3
Six	13.6	8.5	23.8	35.4	42.7	73.9	19.2	59.1	12.8	32.1	4.3	7.8
Seven	8.6	7.3	44.0	48.3	52.5	78.4	25.0	63.0	16.3	35.4	4.5	8.7
Eight	13.0	6.1	75.0	25.0	61.7	80.5	85.7	83.3	25.0	50.0	4.2	17.6
Nine	8.3	11.8	40.0	33.3	61.8	83.8	42.9	81.8	22.2	44.4	21.4	3.6
Ten	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	23.1	40.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	9.1	0.0
Eleven	-	-	0.0	-	37.5	-	0.0	-	50.0	-	0.0	50.0
Twelve	-	0.0	-	-	0.0	100.0	0.0	-	0.0	-	-	-
Occupation												
Baker	0.0	6.7	100.0	40.0	63.6	86.7	0.0	66.7	0.0	50.0	0.0	28.6
Lawyer	0.0	12.5	16.7	25.0	44.4	80.6	-	100.0	-	10.0	0.0	11.1
Blacksmith	13.3	2.5	40.0	41.7	57.9	67.2	50.0	50.0	0.0	23.5	0.0	0.0
Cabinet Maker	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	65.6	83.9	75.0	75.0	0.0	60.0	12.5	0.0
Carpenter	8.5	8.1	42.9	44.1	54.0	75.0	27.8	80.0	26.9	40.0	7.7	7.8
Clergyman	0.0	0.0	50.0	66.7	35.3	93.8	0.0	100.0	50.0	66.7	0.0	40.0
Clerk	16.7	5.4	50.0	42.9	63.6	76.2	0.0	80.0	0.0	60.0	0.0	0.0
Constable	0.0	0.0	-	50.0	42.9	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0
Engineer	0.0	20.0	20.0	50.0	40.0	75.0	-	0.0	0.0	33.3	0.0	30.0
Innkeeper	8.7	0.0	100.0	100.0	84.2	75.0	20.0	100.0	25.0	20.0	16.7	33.3
Laborer	4.7	4.4	17.9	26.9	30.5	56.4	11.8	43.4	9.5	15.8	4.2	0.0
Merchant	6.5	6.3	33.3	40.1	62.7	73.4	66.7	44.4	16.7	44.4	25.0	33.3
Physician	0.0	23.1	-	100.0	47.6	85.2	0.0	50.0	75.0	100.0	50.0	16.7
Tailor	4.3	11.8	0.0	40.0	40.8	82.5	25.0	71.4	0.0	60.0	0.0	10.0
Teacher (male)	20.0	0.0	100.0	50.0	83.3	75.0	100.0	100.0	66.7	-	25.0	-
Tinsmith	22.2	0.0	0.0	25.0	69.2	92.6	100.0	100.0	66.7	50.0	0.0	0.0
Gentleman	6.3	0.0	0.0	44.4	57.1	94.9	57.1	60.0	33.3	44.4	7.7	15.2
Shoemaker	2.0	6.3	15.0	44.9	40.3	72.4	33.3	87.5	18.8	35.3	8.0	11.5
Watchmaker	0.0	25.0	33.3	-	40.0	90.9	-	-	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0
Widow	6.3	8.0	20.0	35.7	43.6	63.7	29.4	43.3	15.4	23.2	2.8	2.8
TOTAL NUMBER	1195	1662	287	458	1994	2443	235	270	384	524	555	793

TABLE 5

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FAMILY

AND PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN ATTENDING SCHOOL,

HAMILTON, ONTARIO, 1861

Number of Children in Family	Age Group					
	3-5	6	7-13	14	15-16	17-20
1 - 2 children	3.1	47.9	66.2	52.2	33.8	10.4
3 - 4 children	6.5	39.1	73.3	61.6	35.8	10.4
5 - 12 children	10.0	41.6	73.8	65.2	38.2	9.8

TABLE 6

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AT DIFFERENT AGES
BY FAMILY SIZE, CONTROLLING FOR WEALTH

HAMILTON, ONTARIO, 1851 AND 1861

Family Size		Mean % Attending Ages 5-16		Mean Percentage Age 3-5		Age 6		Age 7-13		Age 14		Age 15-16		Age 17-20		Families With More Than 50% Attending	
		1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861	1851	1861
No Servants																	
1 - 2 Children	M	35.7	53.4	7.0	5.3	24.7	41.0	43.2	65.2	17.4	51.8	15.9	29.8	4.9	8.3	27.4	42.1
	N	489	989	227	459	77	178	326	607	46	85	82	188	89	221	134	416
3 - 4 Children	M	38.6	61.0	8.7	7.6	25.9	42.9	45.1	72.6	26.6	65.3	19.1	35.1	5.6	6.4	37.7	64.4
	N	284	458	157	268	81	134	283	454	64	95	89	178	90	181	107	295
5 or More Children	M	24.9	55.5	5.5	18.6	44.4	26.3	28.8	71.6	24.4	61.7	10.0	36.9	0.0	15.8	18.9	63.2
	N	111	98	73	74	27	38	111	98	45	47	75	65	48	38	21	62
One Servant																	
1 - 2 Children	M	52.3	56.4	8.0	3.3	30.3	36.3	65.8	69.4	57.1	69.2	21.7	29.2	4.0	27.9	42.0	47.4
	N	155	196	79	105	33	51	95	108	7	13	30	24	25	34	65	93
3 - 4 Children	M	54.9	67.6	17.0	15.2	33.3	50.0	62.4	78.5	41.2	60.0	26.1	41.7	20.0	23.5	53.9	72.6
	N	76	80	49	56	18	20	75	79	17	10	23	24	15	17	22	58
5 or More Children	M	31.4	59.7	5.3	6.3	40.0	53.8	46.9	78.8	40.0	58.3	15.4	50.0	0.0	7.9	29.2	63.6
	N	24	22	19	16	5	13	24	22	10	12	13	18	10	13	7	14
Two or More Servants																	
1 - 2 Children	M	59.4	84.5	7.4	22.0	44.4	60.0	67.4	84.7	50.0	66.7	12.5	60.0	18.2	15.7	45.8	58.6
	N	48	58	27	25	9	10	23	36	4	9	8	10	11	18	22	34
3 - 4 Children	M	66.9	76.9	6.2	7.9	80.0	42.1	66.4	84.4	50.0	100.	62.5	50.0	30.0	50.0	66.7	88.8
	N	36	48	24	38	5	19	36	48	6	5	11	18	10	11	21	39
5 or More Children	M	68.2	99.3	33.3	18.8	50.0	71.4	85.0	100.	20.0	100.	62.5	50.0	30.0	50.0	66.7	88.8
	N	15	9	9	8	4	7	15	9	5	6	8	4	5	4	10	8

TABLE 7

EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS

HAMILTON, ONTARIO, 1851 AND 1861

	Number of Schools	Number of Free Schools	Children Between 5-16	In Attendance: Children Between 5-16	In Attendance: Pupils Over 16	In Attendance: Indigent Pupils	Total Attending School	Total Number of Teachers: M	Total Number of Teachers: F	Trained in Normal Schools
1852	7	0	2971	1271	19	36	1290	7	0	0
1861	8	0	4200	3937	N/A	106	3963	7	30	19

	Roman Catholic Separate Schools: Number of Schools	Roman Catholic Separate Schools: Number of Teachers	Roman Catholic Separate Schools: Number of Pupils	Grammar Schools: Number of Schools	Grammar Schools: Number of Students	Academies and Private Schools: Number of Schools	Academies and Private Schools: Number of Students
1852	0	0	0	1	93	27	1003
1861	1	7	841	1	80(approx.)	8	250

Source: Chief Superintendent of Schools, Annual Report of the Normal, Model and Common Schools in Upper Canada for the Year, 1852 (Québec, 1853)

Chief Superintendent of Schools, Annual Report of the Normal, Model and Common Schools in Upper Canada for the Year 1861 (Québec, 1862)

NOTES

[1]Journal of Education (May, 1861) p. 68

[2]Quoted ibid., (July, 1854) p. 198

[3]Ibid. (April, 1860) p. 56.

[4]David Rubinstein, School Attendance in London 1870-1904: A Social History, University of Hull, Occasional Papers in Economics and Social History No. 1 (University of Hull, Hull, England, 1969).

[5]I have dealt with some of these problems in The Irony of Early School Reform (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1968, reprinted in paperback by Beacon Press) and in Class, Bureaucracy and Schools The Illusion of Educational Change in America (Praeger, New York, 1971); I have collected some 19th century documents which bear on the topic in School Reform: Past and Present (Little, Brown, Boston, 1971)

[6]The Canadian Social History Project is described in my The Canadian Social History Project Interim Report No. 3, an informal publication of the Department of History and Philosophy of Education, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, November 1971 and in two earlier interim reports.

[7]See "How 'Representative' was Hamilton?" working paper number 23 in Interim Report No. 3.

[8]Eric Hobshawm, Industry and Empire (Penguin, London, 1969) p. 157; John Foster, "Nineteenth-Century Towns - A Class Dimension," in H.J. Dyos, ed., The Study of Urban History (Arnold, London, 1968), p. 299.

Notes (2)

[9]See "Conspicuous Consumption", Working Paper No. 5, Interim Report No. 2, November 1969.

[10]By my calculations, in 1851, 25% of tinsmiths were reasonably well-to-do, compared to 11% of clerks.

[11]E.P. Thompson & Eileen Yeo, eds., The Unknown Mayhew (Merlin Press, London, 1971), pp. 338 and 367.

[12]The separate school issue refers to the settlement of the Catholic demand for a share of public money to run Catholic schools. See Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario (1950)

[13]The 1850's was a decade of educational reform in general throughout the province. In Hamilton it was most notable for the establishment of the Central School but evident in other respects, too (Table 7).